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THE REGIONAL DIMENSION: TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

Report by the Director-General

Summary

Updates the information contained in document IDB.9/10/Add.1 and in chapter VIII of document GC.5/10, and reports on the progress made in the implementation of decision IDB.11/Dec.14, in compliance with paragraph (h) of that decision.

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Introduction

1. At its fourth session, the General Conference in resolution GC.4/Res.7 requested the Director-General to report to the following session of the Board and to the General Conference at its fifth session on the progress made in the implementation of that resolution. Since the adoption of that resolution, progress reports have been submitted to the Board at its ninth (IDB.9/10/Add.1) and eleventh sessions (GC.5/10, chap. VIII). The present document, which updates those reports, provides information on action taken as a follow-up to the eleventh session of the Board in accordance with its decision IDB.11/Dec.14.

I. ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN BY UNIDO

2. Guided by the resolutions of the fourth session of the General Conference and the decisions of the ninth and eleventh sessions of the Industrial Development Board, UNIDO continued its efforts to promote and pursue a programme of technical assistance to the Palestinian people.

3. For that purpose consultations and contacts were maintained with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East and the Office of the Permanent Observer of Palestine to UNIDO. An effective working relationship was developed with the UNDP office in Jerusalem that will allow UNIDO to develop technical assistance activities for the Palestinian people in the occupied territories, e.g.:

(a) Preparatory work having been completed, the workshop for entrepreneurs of small industries, funded through a trust fund from Japan, is scheduled to be carried out in November-December 1993 in Vienna;

(b) Project proposals for similar group training programmes in 1994 and 1995 to train small industry entrepreneurs, management personnel and consultants are under preparation for submission to potential donors;

(c) Assistance is being provided in connection with the preparation of a feasibility study in the field of cement industry.

4. UNIDO took part in the United Nations Seminar on Assistance to the Palestinian People (Paris, 26-29 April 1993). In that meeting, a programme for development of the Palestinian national economy for the years 1994-2000 was presented.

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The programme formed an important step for the basis of technical cooperation by the United Nations system, bilateral donors and non-governmental organizations for providing assistance to the Palestinian people. Major industrial needs are envisaged in the programme, which will broaden the opportunities of UNIDO assistance to the Palestinian industrial sector. UNIDO also participated in the Meeting of the Panel of Experts on the Living Conditions of the Palestinian People (Geneva, 28 June - 2 July 1993) with a view to considering measures for improving the living conditions in the occupied territory. Furthermore, UNIDO was represented at three seminars sponsored by the United Nations on the question of the Palestinian people held in New York and Vienna.

5. The Declaration of Principles signed on 13 September 1993 opened a new chapter for the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. One of the most urgent tasks is to establish a sustainable basis for economic and social development through expansion of productive sectors where industry has to play an important role. UNIDO stands ready to join in the efforts of the Palestinian people in this regard and is hopeful that Member States would enhance their cooperation for the industrial development in the territories.

II. ACTION REQUIRED OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE

6. The General Conference may wish to take note of the present progress report.